



EQUAL JUSTICE AMERICA

Summer 2025

EJA FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT



NAME	Ryan Murphy
LAW SCHOOL	Thoms R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University
ORGANIZATION	Allegheny County Bar Foundation Juvenile Court Project

Final Reflection:

During my ten weeks with the ACBF Juvenile Court Project as a certified legal intern, I gained meaningful legal experience within the public interest sector. I spent 1-3 days a week in the courtroom observing proceedings and had many opportunities to present motions and participate in permanency review hearings. I got to see all stages of the legal process handled by our office from client intake to appealing orders for the involuntary termination of parental rights. This work is often challenging, but it has taught me the value in ensuring that everyone has access to representation, especially when their fundamental rights are at stake.

As a reminder from my first reflection, the ACBF Juvenile Court Project is a non profit legal assistance program that advocates for the interests and protects the legal rights of indigent parents whose children are the subjects of dependency and termination of parental rights proceedings in Allegheny County. It is the role of this office to provide legal representation to parents at an often vulnerable and overwhelming time in their life, regardless of their circumstances or ability to pay. Working with parents of diverse backgrounds and differing situations has furthered my own appreciation for this field of work, and I intend to share this sentiment with my peers upon my return to law school.

One final thing I will emphasize about this experience was the amount of time I spent in the courtroom. This can be illustrated by the fact that my very first day was spent observing courtroom proceedings and my last day was spent advocating for clients in permanency review hearings. In the course of this summer, I learned the procedures of the courtroom, how to question a witness, and strategies for presenting a closing position. I am truly grateful to my supervising attorney and the rest of the staff at the Juvenile Court Project for taking the time to help me learn and giving me the chance to showcase what I learned within the courtroom.



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To summarize, I have enjoyed my time interning in public interest law at the ACBF Juvenile Court Project, and I am looking forward to growing more professionally as I return to the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University in the Fall! While my time as an Equal Justice America fellow has come to a close, I encourage you to donate to Equal Justice America's fundraising campaign to help support fellows like myself who have chosen an internship in public interest!